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Mississippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan (MAFFAN), Mississippi Student Justice Alliance (MSJA), actor Danny Glover, Mississippi community leaders announce expansion of Nissan workers' rights campaign to a global audience

Growing coalition of Nissan workers and religious, civic, student, community groups, will now bring their message of Nissan's worker intimidation to the world

(JACKSON, MISS.) – The Mississippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan (MAFFAN), an organization representing clergy, elected officials, civil rights activists and students in Mississippi, the Mississippi Student Justice Alliance (MSJA), actor and activist Danny Glover and other community leaders gathered at Tougaloo College January 29 to affirm their support for Canton, Miss., Nissan workers' efforts to organize a union, without intimidation and threats from the company. The groups also announced the expansion of their support campaign to tell the world about how Nissan treats employees in Mississippi who want the right to decide whether they want a union without Nissan's campaign of fear against them.

The workers and community leaders were joined by a delegation of Brazilian union leaders, including Vagner Freitas de Moraes, president of CUT (Central Unica dos Trabalhadores), the largest trade union federation in Brazil, and Joao Cayres, international affairs secretary of CNM/CUT (Confederacao Nacional dos Metalurgicos da CUT (CNM/CUT).

Workers demanded the ability to hear both sides of the issue equally instead of only anti-union information from the company, and the right to have a free and fair organizing election. They detailed tactics Nissan is using in its anti-union campaign against them, and also called upon Nissan to:

- Honor the UAW Fair Election Principles
- Apologize for and retract statements made to workers implying that the plant will close or lose product if they vote to organize
- Agree to give UAW supporters equal time to show videos, hold one-on-one meetings and group meetings with workers for the same amount of time the company has spent having anti-union meetings in the past year
- Agree not to hold meetings on company time unless union supporters have equal time to meet with workers

Supporters are taking the campaign's message to a variety of locations in the United States, including college campuses and auto shows in Chicago, Ill., and Atlanta, Ga., March 13-17.

Reverend Dr. Isiac Jackson Jr., president of the General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Mississippi and chair of MAFFAN, said the world is going to know about Nissan's treatment of Mississippi workers. "We are taking Nissan's story about how it treats workers to Mississippians, throughout the U.S., and throughout the world. We stand by the workers in Canton and, like them, refuse to allow Nissan workers in Mississippi to be treated like second-class global citizens while Nissan allows workers at other Nissan plants around the world to organize," said Jackson. MAFFAN was founded after Congressman Bennie Thompson called on Mississippi leaders to form a committee to stand up for Nissan workers.

"Since the community has brought our efforts to get a fair election to light, we've had growing interest in our fight for a fair election," said Douglas Brooks, a Nissan technician. "Thank you to the community leaders for telling the world what's happening in Canton – hopefully Nissan is listening and will grant us our rights."

Nissan technician Malcom Sutton says it's time for the world to know what they're going through. "I went to the Detroit auto show to share with consumers how Nissan is intimidating workers and denying us a fair union election," said Sutton. "Most of the consumers I spoke with care really deeply about what's happening in Canton – and many have promised to stand by us in our demands for a fair union election."

"Nissan seems to think that since they pay us a good wage, that gives them the right to threaten us at work and deny us a fair election," said Michael Carter, a worker in the Canton plant. "We deserve a voice at work and the opportunity to decide for ourselves if we want a union. Nissan is currently denying us that right."

MSJA leader Tyson Jackson says a growing number of young people are deeply concerned about Nissan's treatment of Mississippi workers. "Today's student is tomorrow's Nissan worker. We want to see today's workers and the workers of the future treated fairly, and we want them to have a voice on the job, and the right to choose unionization without threats from the company," said Jackson. "We're effectively using social media to reach my generation of supporters of this campaign. And our numbers are growing." One of MSJA's goals is to continue expanding membership through the establishment of local MSJA chapters at many of the nation's 115 historically black colleges and universities.

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